

TESTIMONIAL TO MR. J. B. PAPWORTH,
THE ARCHITECT.

As mentioned a short time since, that some of Mr. Papworth's professional friends had subscribed to present to that gentleman a tribute of their esteem, upon his retiring from practice. The testimonial took the shape of a silver inkstand, and on Monday last the subscribers met at the residence of Professor Donaldson, who has been one of the most active promoters of the offering, to present it to Mr. Papworth.

Professor Cockerell, at their request, conveyed with the testimonial the congratulations and kind wishes of Mr. Papworth's friends, in an elegant and feeling address,—congratulations that he had been able to pass through a long life devoted to the Beautiful of his art, without reproach, and hearty wishes that he might long live to enjoy his escape from the sweat of the battle, and see his sons, to whom he had resigned his practice, following worthily in his steps.

Mr. Papworth, almost in tears, expressed his high appreciation of the kindness which had been offered him,—the bright ray of sunshine in which they had allowed his professional life to end. The recollection of that event would remain with him as a bright form, to smooth his course to eternity, and he thanked them most heartily and sincerely for the delight they had afforded him.

We would add expressions of our personal esteem and respect, to those which were uttered when Mr. Donaldson mentioned that it was Mr. Papworth's birthday, and called on all present to drink long life to him.

The inkstand was thus inscribed:—

"To John Buonarroti Papworth, Esq., M.I.B.A., Architect to H.M. the King of Wurtemberg, first Director of the Government Schools of Design in England, &c., this Testimonial is presented by a few professional Friends, upon his retiring from practice, as a tribute of their respect and esteem for his talents as a distinguished Architect and for his worth as a Man.—January, 1847.

T. Allason, S. Angell, G. Bailey, C. Barry, R.A., T. Bellamy, W. J. Booth, J. Burrell, R. Cantwell, C. R. Cockerell, R.A., T. L. Donaldson, C. Fowler, E. M. Foxhall, G. Gutch, G. Smith, P. Hardwick, R.A., J. D. Hopkins,* J. Kaye, H. E. Kendall, J. Lockyer, J. Lockyer, jun., C. Mayhew, W. A. Nicholson,* J. Noble, W. M. Nurse, G. Papworth,* W. F. Pocock, J. Shaw, J. Stokes,* W. Tite, J. Thomson,* S. West.*

ECCLESIOLOGICAL CARVERS AND
MASONS.

SIR,—In No. 206 of your paper, January 16th, there is a notice of a "Masons' Provident Institution," of which the object, as far as I can gather, is to grant pensions to aged and needy members of the trade, and to their widows and orphans, and also to supply relief to those who are disabled by accident or bodily infirmity. The qualification, in the first case, is stated to be, that the mason or sculptor must be of ten years' standing in the trade, and fifty-five years of age. An appeal is made to employers and architects in behalf of this institution. Now, on what grounds this institution is formed, or whether any regard is had to the religious and moral influence which such a society may exercise on this large class of men, I am quite ignorant. But, supposing for a moment that all is right in this respect, I think the formation of such an institution a favourable opportunity to make some remarks on this important subject. To take the last point in your notice first, it appears to me that the appeal to employers and architects for support is most just; and I would venture to add, that such an institution, if constructed on right principles, might as justly appeal to all the ecclesiastical and architectural societies now existing in England. For it is a certain matter of fact, that without efficient operatives all scientific knowledge fails of its due execution; and those persons who have been concerned in the restoration of churches well know how difficult it is to procure skilful workmen, both carvers and masons, who shall in all points be desirable to work in a church. This observation, perhaps, may apply especially to the clergy, who undertake the restoration of

churches as a matter of principle rather than of taste or inclination, but who have sufficient discrimination to detect bad work, and sufficient knowledge of the sanctity of a church to be horrified at the indecency and irreverence of the common run of workmen.

The occupation of a mason, and more particularly a carver, if he discharge his office properly, gives him an especial claim on his employers. For it is well known, that the occupation is most injurious to health, and very destructive of human life; and I believe that a strict inquiry would discover a great proportion of early deaths from consumption amongst sculptors, and an unusual degree of illness, which occasionally disables them from work. The flexibility of hand, too, and acuteness of eye, which are required to make a good sculptor, can hardly be retained in a sufficient degree, to enable him to carry on his trade as an operative to any advanced period of life. If, therefore, they spend their lives in the service of the church (and it is chiefly in the working of the details of churches that the best carvers are required), they are fairly entitled to the best support which those connected with the church can give them. As to the qualifications for assistance from the Provident Institution, though they appear somewhat incongruous, I say nothing, feeling that the parties concerned in the framing of those rules would have gathered sufficient statistical facts to render them sound and useful.

But a method occurs to me by which carvers might be very much benefited, both as to their moral and practical condition; and that is, if architectural societies would institute premiums (after the manner of agricultural societies) for the best workmen and most decent men; and that testimonials, both as to efficiency of skill and decency of character, from clergymen and architects under whom they have worked, should be the grounds on which they should apply for these premiums. The man who had worked the longest time under the same master should have especial preference; and it would be well to make a distinction in the appointment of the premiums between those who are good carvers of new work, and those who are clever and patient at cleaning and restoring old work; for the latter is a more difficult man to find than the former.

Should you be disposed to give publication to these remarks in your useful publication, you may, perhaps, hear again on the same subject from your obedient servant,

A PRACTICAL ECCLESIOLOGIST.

Bristol, January 23, 1847.

THE BUILDINGS ACT AND THE MASTER
CARPENTERS.

A MEETING of the Society of Master Carpenters was held in the Freemasons' Tavern, on Wednesday last, at 7 p.m., to appoint a committee, in accordance with the suggestion of Lord Morpeth, made to a deputation of the Society on the 17th December last, in order to prepare the draft of a New Buildings Act. Amongst those present, were—Mr. Biers (in the chair), Messrs. Masham, G. Lever, Wm. Cubitt, Timpon, Knight, Nesham, Higgs, Sparkes, Stephens, Harris, Gooch, Outhwaite, Burstall, jun., Arding, Norris, and R. L. Jecks, Secretary.

The chairman stated, that on waiting on Lord Morpeth, with a limited deputation, his lordship informed them, that though the Government did not intend immediately to proceed with any amendment of the Buildings Act, it was probable that in the course of the session, measures would be brought forward to obviate as far as possible the many complaints and objections that had already been urged in regard to the working of the present Act. At the same time, his lordship desired to know the precise nature of the objections which the deputation had to urge. The deputation therefore, referring to the petition of the society of date 12th March, 1846, against the present Act, entered into a detail of the ill-workings by which parties appeared to be most aggrieved, dwelling more particularly on the useless and oppressive nature of some of the enactments; the expense of the staff, the prohibitions as to the use of timber, which were in many cases not only useless but equivocal and mysterious, especially as relates to party-walls, and the mode of putting in plates; the enactments as

to projections in front of houses overhanging the public way, &c., with many other objections. His lordship, in conclusion, had requested the society to furnish him with a draft bill, such as would appear to them to be an improvement. The present meeting had been called for the purpose of appointing a committee to carry out his lordship's suggestion.

After some incidental remarks on various points, such as those relating to disputes under the Act, whether they should not be brought before the magistrates; as to the supervision of the public building class, from which small schools and such like ought to be excluded; the expensive and uncertain, as well as of ten absurd, enactments as to fees, which frequently perplexed the district surveyors themselves; all of which Lord Lincoln had promised to attend to in the last bill. Mr. Higgs observed, that with respect to front projections, he thought the referees had taken a wrong view of the meaning of the act, which only required the deletion of a few words to prevent all mistakes. He thought the proposed committee should consist of the whole board. It would be very desirable to have men who had already been practically engaged in the matter in question. After some discussion on this point, it was ultimately moved by Mr. William Cubitt, and resolved, that the members then present should constitute the committee, with power to add to their number; and it was then determined that Mr. Grissell's name should be added to the list.

MASONS' PROVIDENT INSTITUTION.

THE first annual meeting of this institution was held on the 25th inst., at the Westminster Literary Institution, Mr. Wm. Freeman, treasurer, in the chair. The secretary, Mr. Whitehead, having read the report of the managing committee, the chairman shewed what had been attained by the exertions of the committee, as also the benefits derived from such an institution.

Resolutions were subsequently passed calling upon the operatives to enrol themselves as members of the institution, as a duty they owed to themselves and families. Thanks were given to the various employers who had contributed towards the funds, trusting that the institution would, in like manner, receive the aid of those who had not yet given it. Thanks were also voted to Alderman John Johnson, president, to the other members of the direction, and to the Editor of THE BUILDER.* The account shewed a balance in the bankers' hands of 161*l.* 3*s.* 7*d.* The following sums were presented during the meeting:—Mr. John Foot, 10*l.* 10*s.*; Messrs. H. & J. Lee, 2*l.*; and Mr. Field, 2*l.* 2*s.*

THE WESTMINSTER SEWERS AND
HEALTH OF TOWNS.

AT a Court of Sewers, held on the 22nd inst., Captain Bugue in the chair, Mr. Le Breton called attention to the strictures on the Westminster Commissioners of Sewers, contained in a report published by the Health of Towns Commission (report of Health of Towns Association also), and after proposing several resolutions, and some discussion, ultimately moved:—

"That the opinion of the attorney-general and Mr. Peacock be taken by the solicitors of this court as to whether any and what steps may be successfully taken against the publisher and author of the report of the Health of Towns Commission, reflecting upon the conduct of the members of this commission."

The chairman put the motion, and, on a show of hands, declared the numbers to be equal for and against it. The chairman then said that, as the issue was left to him, he should give his vote against the motion, and it was consequently lost.

FALL OF AN ENORMOUS CHIMNEY AT WIGAN.—A chimney upwards of 400 feet high, which we alluded to during its progress, fell to the ground last week. We shall be glad to receive particulars of the foundation which was prepared for it, the height, &c. of footings, and its construction generally.

* For which we have to express our acknowledgments.

* Pupil of Mr. Papworth.